The Unitarian Calendar

I praise Thee while my days go on;
I love Thee while my days go on;
Through dark and dearth, through fire and frost,
With emptied arms and treasures lost,
I thank Thee while my days go on.

ELIZABETH BROWNING.

Vol. 3 JUNE — 1911 No. 10

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With headquarters in the building of the American Unitarian Association, 25 Beacon Street, Boston, Mass.

Local offices at 104 East 20th Street, New York City; 105 South Dearborn Street, Chicago, Ill., and 376 Sutter Street, San Francisco, Cal.

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The Unitarian Calendar

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CHILDREN OF THE LIGHT

BY REV. E. Q. S. OSGOOD.

Of the Unitarian Congregational Society, Brattleboro, Vt.

"Children of the Light" we term ourselves, especially when thrilled by close contact with one another in some great religious assembly devoted to a rededication of the truth that makes us free. But do we try as we ought to "walk" as those upon whom such light has descended? "Children of the Day" are we; yet are our thoughts and our words and our deeds such as would always gladly welcome an insight more watchful and a vision more keen than that of earth? We are "Sons of God." We profess to look up to Him as our Father. Still, does not our filial trust often flag? Do not our earnest resolves grow weak? Do not discontent and impatience frequently darken and imbitter the hour which, were we faithful "Children of the Light," would be filled with an abiding peace? The Master is our companion and guide. We recognize the rich value of his life and teachings. But are we his disciples at heart? Casting out the devils of impurity and despair? Relieving the oppressed of their burdens? Freely giving of the waters of life, even as we have received? Our Souls are touched and inspired by the grandeur of the Moral Law. We reverence character. Yet, how feeble, how inadequate, is our own living, at times! How prone are we to tread the broad path of wrongdoing,

in place of the narrow road which leads to life everlasting!

Nay! Too precious is the trust placed in our keeping for us to be false to the obligations that are bound up with it. As disciples of the faith we love and honor, we must act the part of disciples. Possessed with the light, we must help scatter its rays into every dark corner of the community in which our work is being done. Do we so live, virtue must go forth from us—even as the candle's slender rays cannot fail to pierce the surrounding gloom. Our trust in the "Eternal Goodness;" our fellowship with the Christ-like spirit; our respect for character,—will all be displayed,—not in homilies or essays, or beautiful poems,—but in the cherishing of the pure and holy thought, in the speaking of the generous, truth-abiding word, in the act that declares the presence of a sympathizer with the best that is in man, of a doer of the will of the Most High.

RELIGION AS INSPIRATION TO LIFE

BY REV. H. C. PARKER.

Of the First Unitarian Parish, Woburn, Mass.

How did Christianity become an inspiration to life in the beginning? It was the new idealism of its age. In the mind of Jesus it was a gospel of brotherhood and goodwill, a prophecy of a new and diviner order of human society. In this ideal kingdom he believed with all his mind, heart, soul and strength. He believed in it so much that he must needs go out and preach to others and by his persuasive word make them believe in it and preach it with all their power. What was at first the inspiration of one mind became the inspiring hope of many minds—in the

course of time, of multitudes of minds. Such a mighty passion became this new ideal that men and women counted it the greatest glory that they could conceive to be permitted to lay down their lives for it. The more its believers were persecuted, the more eager they were to be persecuted for the kingdom of heaven's sake. With people thus on fire with their religion there could be no question of its triumph in the world nor of its power to lift common men into martyrs and heroes. If the idealism of our time, the religion we admire is to be an uplifting power in life, it must be made so by the passionate earnestness and consecrated efforts of those whose minds are illumined by its light and whose hearts are quickened by its spirit. This is the way of all progressive movements in the history of the world.

I have no faith in fatalism, in destiny, in blind force. I believe in God, the living God. I believe in the American people, a brave and free people who do not bow the neck or bend the knee to any other and who desire no other to bow the neck or bend the knee to them. I believe that a Republic is greater than an Empire. I believe finally whatever clouds may darken the horizon, that the world is growing better, that today is better than yesterday, that tomorrow will be better than today.

—*George Frisbee Hoar.*

The Deists' God was a negligible quantity; the Naturalists' reason was an Almighty Sufficiency. An adequate religion is possible under neither conception. Religion to be of any worth must mean a vital relationship between God and man. —*Charles Travers.*

THE GREATEST THING

BY REV. E. A. COIL.

Of the First Unitarian Society, Marietta, Ohio.

Convinced that the experience of humanity justifies its belief that true religion is summed up in the two great commandments which emphasize love rather than law or dogma, religious liberalism aims, first of all, to cultivate love in the heart, and it insists that love should be free to flower and fruit into reverence and noble deeds unhindered by an arbitrary authoritative interference from without. Religion, thus understood and applied, will never stain its hands with blood in an attempt to enforce submission to its decrees; but it will ever go about the world, reverent in thought, ministering to the needy, and striving to promote justice and mercy, and, regardless of race or creed, seeking the unification of humanity on the basis of reverence and service born of love to God and love to man. "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." There is a message worthy of being proclaimed from the housetops, taught to children and sages, and carried, in sermon and in song, to the uttermost parts of the earth. In potential form it is the kingdom of heaven on earth, the reign of peace, the realization of that unity of humanity for which Jesus so earnestly worked and devoutly prayed. Than the exemplification and proclaiming of such a message there is no greater glory possible to man.

"Ever a worshipful man will be loath to see a worshipful man shamed."

—*Sir Thomas Malory.*

When conversing with the woman at the well, Jesus represented the gift of God as "living water," that which contained life and power and spiritual refreshment. But, when the disciples came back from Sychar, he changed the figure and called it "meat"—the giver of strength and vitality. He said it was meat to do the will of him that sent him. That is, the *doing* of something was food. The soul was nourished by being used. To do the will of Him that sent you is to gain life, to possess health, to accumulate strength! One would never say, There are yet four months, and then cometh the harvest. The soul, being ready for its work, would find it at hand. At that moment the young prophet, with quivering nerves and flashing eyes, pointed out over the plains, and cried, "Behold, I say unto you, Lift up your eyes and look on the fields, that they are white already unto harvest."

Thus the gift of God was to come through service. The disciples, the woman of Samaria, the men of Sychar, had entered into the labors of their fathers, and they had reason to be thankful; but to the future they were to set their gaze. It was for them a gift of God to have the power to do something.

It was as if he said, You have a power to think: put the truth into the empty or the mistaken or the deluded minds of men! You have vital impulses: awaken the sleeping souls of the world! You have judgment: counsel those who are stumbling and falling! You have faith: bestow it upon the despairing! Heal the sick, open blind eyes, unstop deaf ears, raise the dead! If thou knewest the gift of God, a hundred Messiahs would come to break the fetters of this unjust, brutal, sin-sick, blundering age. The world is thirsty: give it water to drink! It is

hungry: give it meat to eat! It is naked: clothe it! It is imprisoned and it is enslaved: it is a gift of God to be able to set it free!

Lewis G. Wilson.

THE GROWTH OF UNITARIANISM

We are beginning to see that a Unitarian church cannot be the creature of a day. Its work is only well done where it can shape, little by little, by its teachings and the influence of a noble manhood and womanhood, the entire character of a community. Our success is not to be reduced to statistics.

"There is no minister in our city so highly respected and who does so much good as the pastor of the Unitarian church," said the deacon of an orthodox society. In another place a grand revival was advertised. Five eminent preachers were imported to conduct it. They were to be paid for their two weeks' work as much money as the local pastors received for the labors of a year. In their opening meetings they spent much time in assuring the people of that city that this was to be a revival conducted according to common sense and reason. There was to be no sensationalism. The Higher Criticism was to be respected. They were to be broad and liberal in their presentations of Christianity. There were a thousand people in the congregation. But just across the street was a little Unitarian church whose pastors had been preaching and teaching and liberalizing the popular mind for a quarter of a century, and those revivalists *knew* it; and they knew that the success of their enterprise depended upon their making at the start their peace with the Unitarianism that already possessed the hearts of the Protestant population.

YOUR SUNDAY OPPORTUNITY

BY REV. CHARLES E. ST. JOHN,

Of the First Unitarian Church, Philadelphia, Pa.

At the church service you get something for yourself, and you do something for others. For yourself, as you enter, you receive the uplifting influence of a sacred place, of beautiful memories, and of living human earnestness. Then the service and the prayer act upon you. A prayer is a devout utterance that can lift souls into touch with God. It is the voice of people's needs and yearnings. Earnest public prayer cultivates in you a willingness, an eagerness of spirit that makes you see God. By prayer your sorrow, misery, weakness, sin, hope, joy, are brought to God so that He may heal and bless. Along this path of the spirit lie forgiveness, peace, courage, joy. By prayer work becomes holy, and life a walking with God. If at church you get only a little of this influence, you are blessed.

You also hear a sermon. It may not be a brilliant one, not so good as some book you might read at home. But it has certain powers all its own. It is the work of a man who has devoted his life with concentrated interest to specific ends. In some degree the preacher knows God and the human soul. And in the degree of that knowledge his sermon is efficient for the quickening of conscience, the overthrowing of selfishness, the banishment of injustice. The sermon builds up will power, and helps you to be pure, patient, strong, noble. It enlarges your faith in God, your self-reliance, your sense of life eternal. It arouses moral enthusiasm and moulds your soul to better deeds.

At church, then, there abide for you faith, hope, love, truth, and interest in life's finest things. At church you may attune life afresh to the

music of the perfect ideal, the truth. By deepening your feeling towards God and man, you may improve the quality of your motives and so dignify your daily life.

In the second place, consider what you may do for others by church attendance. For one thing you re-enforce the minister's power for good. Your presence magnifies and emphasizes his message. Any minister with any sermon will preach better to a congregation of five hundred than to one of fifty—not better in the spirit of piety and earnestness—but more effectively. He is dealing in greater potencies of soul power, is wielding grander tides of life. Any person can thus increase his minister's value to the community.

Furthermore, by entering a congregation week after week, you help in a forceful demonstration of the greatness of religion; you declare the vivifying power of worship; you proclaim the beauty of holiness. You are co-operative with good men to induce the world to rally around religion as a principle, a noble passion for right conduct.

And finally, at church you are privileged to bestow upon others the benediction of friendliness. The more friendly your spirit the more you will get out of a service, and the more you will put into it for the benefit of many. Most that you wish for yourself you might be able to secure apart from the church. But the most far-reaching public helpfulness springs from united effort. It is when working together that we bring great good to pass. And what can better draw us together than the religion of the church we like best?

"The Idealist is the kind of a man we need."
—*Samuel M. Crothers.*

UNITARIAN HYMN

To thine eternal arms, O God,
Take us, thine erring children, in;
From dangerous paths too boldly trod,
From wandering thoughts and dreams of sin.

Those arms were round our childish ways,
A guard through helpless years to be;
Oh, leave not our maturer days,
We still are helpless without thee!

We trusted hope and pride and strength:
Our strength proved false, our pride was vain,
Our dreams have faded all at length—
We come to thee, O Lord, again!

A guide to trembling steps yet be,
Give us of thine eternal powers!
So shall our paths all lead to thee,
And life smile on like childhood's hours.

—*T. W. Higginson.* 1847.

He who is in bondage to law or dogma keeps inquiring: "Which is the greatest commandment?" He waits for ecclesiasticism to indicate to him when to bow his head in worship, and for the state to dictate what services he shall render and what debts he shall pay. If a fellow being, to whom he might be helpful, is in need he asks: "What saith the law?" and accordingly gives or withholds. He passes the wounded man by the wayside because he is not of his nationality, and worships on Mt. Gerizim instead of in Jerusalem. Assuming that he is right, and everybody else wrong, he is formal, intolerant, exclusive, for the letter hems in, hinders normal growth, and eventually kills.

—*Rev. E. A. Coil.*

THE PARISH COMMITTEE AND THE MINISTER

BY REV. HILARY BYGRAVE.

Of the First Parish, Scituate, Mass.

Of course the success of a Church depends largely upon the efficiency of the Parish Committee. This committee should be composed of the livest and most earnest men and women in the parish. It is no place for a stick of dead timber. Then granted that the minister is worth his salt and knows his business, he too should be *ex officio* a member of this committee; they should meet together for mutual conference in regard to the affairs and work of the parish not less than four times a year, or better still, once in two months. At such meetings the minister might make suggestions and advise the trial or adoption of this or some other plan for better or more vigorous parish administration. And on the other hand the committee *as a whole,* better than any individual on his own initiative, might be able to indicate to the minister how *he* might more efficiently serve the interests of the Parish—or how he might better vary his pulpit instructions, and not preach merely to please himself. Anyway, I plead for a more hearty co-operation on the part of the Parish Committee and the minister. I know of parish committees that never meet but about once a year, and which never think of taking council with their minister, even though he has some horse sense and a fair amount of business capacity; but I don't think such churches take, or can take, a very high rank for efficiency or success.

"Thus betwixt the spur of Desire and the Bridle of Reason I am neare ridden to death in a ring of despaire." —*John Smith.*

There are worse misfortunes than broken bones; there are broken hearts—worse ills than diseased bodies; there are souls that are sick—worse afflictions than pain—there are spirits in the agonies of death and in the fever of selfishness. The need of spiritual health is constant; it does help toward physical health. On this deep need of spiritual life rests the Church; by this abiding necessity for spiritual training is it created. Therefore the Church, in standing for "the care of souls" represents what is paramount and perpetual in human life. Its ministry is linked in widest benefaction to the whole circle of human welfare.—From "The Church of Today,"

—By Joseph Henry Crooker.

A consciousness of the intimate presence of God is necessary to the best work of which anyone is capable. When we discover one who works steadily, calmly, and withal happily, at his chosen or his appointed task, we know one who at the center of his being holds an unshaken faith in God, though we may not be privileged to penetrate the veil of fine reserve in which it is hidden. The stoic can be strong and brave, can do earnestly his unavoidable work, but he cannot do it joyously. Flippancy may be the refuge of the atheist, but it is as far from the serene joy of faith as is despair itself. A present God, not a far-off Indifference, not an unpitying Law, not an unreasoning Chance, can give peace to the troubled soul, hope to the discouraged, strength to the fainting, and, in the last resort, enable the dying to confront the end of all things earthly with joyous confidence. The poised and balanced nature is stayed on God as a rocking stone upon the point of rest. *—Emeline Harrington.*

THE TRAINED IMAGINATION

BY REV. F. M. BENNETT.

Of the Unitarian Society, Lawrence, Kan.

In the realm of fancy we are not supposed to have much directing power, but in the work of imagination training is important. We can see how much it counts if we consider the achievements of modern science. The modern scientist is a man with a trained imagination. He is also a man of faith. If he lacks these capacities he is not much of a scientist. He must be able to think ahead and accurately picture to himself the possible results of his work. He must also have faith in the reality and worth of his truth. He must be a believer in the beneficence of his experiments, and in the co-ordination of his discoveries with positive knowledge and established laws. He must assume the divineness of the world with which he deals. By the training of his imaginative capacities he may greatly aid the quality and worth of his visions of what his discoveries are to be. He may greatly direct his dreams into lawful and wholesome channels.

So, also, every positive worker, every real artist, every creator in any realm of life must have a trained imagination and faith in the beneficence of its working. Each one must use his creative capacities to help him choose what his visions shall be and what he shall produce in accord with them.

"It is one thing, from the mountain's shaggy top to see the land of peace and to find no way thither; and another to keep on the way thither." —*St. Augustine.*

"The joys I have possessed, in spite of fate, are mine." —*Dryden's Horace.*

THE HELL THAT IS

BY DAVID UTTER.

Of the First Unitarian Society, of Denver, Col.

The mission of Jesus, as we see it, was the teaching that God is our father and that we are all brethren, and that salvation is a turning away from iniquity.

Personal unrighteousness weakens a man for all good work and disqualifies him for all the ways of life in which true enjoyment and real happiness may be found.

Iniquity in state, or nation, or city, spreads danger as pitfalls for unwary feet along all life's common ways. Down they go, all over the land, into these pits of disgrace and shame, of anxiety, and struggle, and remorse—our fellow citizens, respected, beloved—down, because of their greed and lack of integrity; insurance men, railroad men, public officials conspiring with land grabbers and timber thieves, bribers and bribe-takers—what a harvest of woe for lack of simple honesty!

I think there is no eternal damnation, no burning hell of fire and brimstone to continue without end in the world to come, but surely iniquity has plunged into present damnation hundreds of our fellow citizens in this country who ought to have known better than to engage in the frauds that have disgraced them.

There are comparatively few so self-poised and self-centered that they are sufficient unto themselves. Some there are who go hither and thither, gathering strength and courage everywhere. But to the mass of humanity life is incomplete without its complement of a life very close to it, from which it can draw, to which it can give—a life essentially its own, one with

whom to hold common hopes, fears, aspirations, a companion in recreation, an answering chord of tenderness in affliction, a respondent in joy, and an helpmeet in the labors of life. This is the mutual need — a union that shall bring strength and helpfulness to both:

"As one lamp lights another, nor grows less,
So nobleness enkindles nobleness."

—*Mrs. S. C. H. Jones.*

TRINITARIAN AND UNITARIAN

BY HERBERT H. MOTT,

Of the First Unitarian Congregational Society, Nashua, N. H.

What object is served by creating this distinction?

The Unitarian object is to make religion a reality by making the idea of God a reality. To make the idea of God real, it must be made rational. This the simple Unitarian doctrine of God as a heavenly Father does. Wholly in accord with reason, it appeals to the understanding with the force of a real thing. Consequently it can be believed with the mind and heart and soul and becomes a practical power in the world.

The Trinitarian idea, on the other hand, is difficult to believe, it confuses and bewilders the mind, and tends to make the idea of God unreal, with the consequence that religion itself becomes unreal and ceases to be a practical power in the world.

"God's people are all marked with the same mark, and have, in the main, one and the same heart, guided by one and the same spirit of truth." —*John Endicott.*

NEWS NOTES

An interesting and important event took place at Berkeley, Cal., on May 12th, at the commencement exercises of the Pacific Unitarian School for the Ministry. On that occasion two students graduated, one receiving the degree of Bachelor of Theology.

The most significant event, however, was the inauguration of the Rev. William Sacheus Morgan, B. A., Ph. D., who was made a Professor of Systematic Theology. Dr. Morgan's inaugural address was upon "Perennial and Necessary Modifications of Theology." Dr. Wilbur made an address upon "The Conditions and Needs of the School," while several others took important parts in the services.

The Pacific School is looking forward with great anticipation to increasing numbers and resources, and their Unitarian friends upon the Atlantic seaboard extend cordial congratulations and prayers for an ever extending field of usefulness.

The officers of the North Pacific Conference display an unusual amount of energy and foresight by the preparation of their preliminary programme for the meeting of the Conference, which is to be held in Eugene, Ore., Oct. 17th to 19th, 1911.

By consulting this programme we learn that a Conference lecture is to be delivered by Rev. William G. Foster of Read College, Portland, an address upon "Civic Righteousness," by Dr. Morgan of the Pacific School for the Ministry, and one upon "How to Study the Gospel of Matthew, Mark and Luke," by Dean Wilbur.

On Thursday there is to be a Women's Meet-

ing and a Men's Meeting, at the latter of which the subject of discussion is "Work of the Church for Men; and Work of Men for the Church."

Many preparations are being made for a most effective meeting of the Conference, including tours about town and a banquet at the hotel.

Doubtless the various ministers who make use of the CALENDAR will report to their congregations concerning the exercises of Anniversary Week. They have been of unusual interest, involving many earnest discussions, bordering at times upon the province of controversy; but this has been caused by strong and honest convictions, and not by feelings of animosity or malicious design. Such discussions are always helpful in the end.

On the whole the May meetings of 1911 have been unusually interesting, and the parts taken have been by ministers and laymen of prominence and recognized ability. The attendance was large, and the interest of delegates and friends was constant throughout the week.

During the absence of Rev. Fred A. Weil of Bellingham, Washington, in attendance upon the May meetings in Boston, lay services will be conducted by laymen of the church. They will read sermons by eminent Unitarian divines and conduct the services. It is the good fortune of the Bellingham church to have so large a number of able men who are willing to assume the responsibility of the services in the absence of its minister.

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